

15 December 1951

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Robert G. Hooker, Jr.  
Policy Planning Staff, Department of State

FROM: Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT: Select House Subcommittee for the Investigation of the  
Katyn Massacre

1. In your memorandum to me dated December 12, you have requested any information that I might have concerning the above mentioned House Committee, which might be helpful to the Department in preparing its testimony and in anticipating questions or possible lines of action by the Subcommittee.

2. As I told you last September, John Mitchell who was at that time considering accepting employment as Counsel for the Committee [redacted] known to myself and others within this organization. About five days ago he telephoned me to advise that he had accepted the position and was in the process of developing the material and lining up witnesses for the consideration of the Committee. He indicated that he might call upon this Agency to assist him in certain ways, for example, in the translation of certain foreign language documents which have come into his possession and in obtaining certain not too clearly specified kinds of information from abroad. At the time of this conversation, Mr. Mitchell stated that the hearings would probably not commence before the first of February; that he hoped to receive the cooperation of the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army, as well as of the State Department. He indicated that it would be his purpose to convince the Chairman and other members of the Committee of the importance of sticking to the merits of the case as such and to avoid the turning of the investigation into a pursuit of the governmental officials (presumably in G-2) who have been accused in the press and elsewhere of having suppressed certain highly relevant documents.

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3. Mr. Mitchell indicated that there had been some disposition on the part of the members of the Committee to extend invitations to the Soviet Government and the Polish Government to present testimony in support of their version of the Katyn Forest incident--for the purpose of providing the fullest opportunity to be heard by all parties at interest and in order to avoid the impression that the hearing is not a completely impartial and objective effort to bring out the facts. Mr. Mitchell said that he did not know whether the Committee would pursue this latter approach, but he said that he was inclined to believe the State Department would have an interest in the matter if this were to be the case.

4. I did not respond to Mr. Mitchell's requests and statements in any degree of detail nor did I undertake to comment upon the various possible courses of action outlined by him. I said that I did not feel that this

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was a matter which could be discussed on the telephone and that I would prefer to talk to him in my office in order to give him my replies to his questions and requests. I assume that he will be getting in touch with me at some time in the relatively near future, and as this is a Congressional matter, I propose to have the ensuing exchanges handled by our Legislative Counsel Office. For your own information I do not consider that it is appropriate for this Agency to become involved in Congressional investigations and I would not want to have us burdened with the various tasks which Mr. Mitchell may have in mind. If Mr. Mitchell or his Committee require the obtainment of documents, newspapers, etc. from abroad, I should think it would be more appropriate for them to address their requests to the Department of State if they do not have their own machinery for accomplishing this part of their job...For your further information and in order to better enable you and the other departmental officers concerned to appraise the situation and estimate the probable courses of action, Congressman Madden comes from Gary, Indiana, where there is a large and vocal population of Polish Americans. Incidentally, this is a campaign year.

(Signed) FRANK G. WISNER

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